

## Appendix 2. Interdisciplinary Team NEPA Checklist

**Project Title:** Bible Springs Complex Wild Horse Gather

**NEPA Log Number:** DOI-BLM-UT-C010-2022-0012

**Project Leader:** Chad Hunter

**DETERMINATION OF STAFF:** *(Choose one of the following abbreviated options for the left column)*

NP = not present in the area impacted by the proposed or alternative actions

NI = present, but not affected to a degree that detailed analysis is required

PI = present with potential for relevant impact that need to be analyzed in detail in the EA. **The NEPA Handbook states that issues need to be analyzed in detail if: 1) Analysis of the issue is necessary to make a reasoned choice between alternatives; 2) The issue is significant...or where analysis is necessary to determine the significance of impacts.**

**RESOURCES AND ISSUES CONSIDERED:**

Determination	Resource	Rationale for Determination	Signature	Date
NI	Air Quality	Air quality in the area is good as is typical of relatively undeveloped areas of the western U.S. The area meets NAAQS. Nothing in the proposal would affect current conditions.	G. Ginouves	3/11/2022
NP	Areas of Critical Environmental Concern	There are no ACECs within the Cedar City Field Office.	Dave Jacobson	3/2/2022
NI	Cultural Resources	This project is unlikely to have any effect on cultural resources. The trap and temporary holding locations will be located on an area of existing disturbance, such as road or a wash. The possibility of finding intact cultural resources in these areas is minimal to non-existent. If an existing disturbed area cannot be located for the temporary area, a cultural resource inventory will take place prior to the gather. If cultural resources are located during this inventory, the corral area will be moved to another location which does not contain cultural resources.	Paul N. Briggs (for) Roy Plank	3/25/2022
NP	Environmental Justice	There are no minority or economically disadvantaged groups in the project area.	G. Ginouves	3/11/2022
NI	Farmlands (Prime or Unique)	There are likely soils within the HMA capable of being prime or unique farmlands, but the actions and alternatives described in the proposal would not affect the status of prime or unique farmlands.	E. Shotwell	2/17/2022
NI	Floodplains	The proposed action and alternatives described in the proposal would not affect the function of a floodplain. Therefore, the action is consistent with Executive Order 11988.	E. Shotwell	2/17/2022
NI	Fuels/Fire Management	The transient and superficial nature of the proposed gather activities would not substantially impact fuels/fire management.	M. Esplin	3/3/2022
NI	Geology / Mineral Resources/Energy Production	The transient and superficial nature of the proposed horse gather would not substantially impact geology, mineral resources, or energy production in the gather area.	E. Ginouves	2/15/2022
NI	Greenhouse Gas Emissions	Releases of greenhouse gasses (GHGs), such as carbon dioxide, would occur because of operation of internal combustion engines being operated during the gather. The removal would occur in a very remote area using improved county roads and lesser roads. Release of GHGs would be consistent with current levels of releases in the area and very	G. Ginouves	3/11/2022

Determination	Resource	Rationale for Determination	Signature	Date
		short term. As a result of the transient and superficial nature of the proposed gather activities, no substantial impact would occur to GHG emissions.		
PI	Invasive Species/Noxious Weeds	This issue is analyzed in the Rangeland Health section of Chapter 3. Reducing the wild horse population to within AML would contribute to maintaining sufficient vegetation and litter within the HMAs, protect soil from erosion, meet plant physiological requirements, facilitate plant reproduction, and reduce potential for the spread of noxious weeds.	J. Bulloch	2/23/2022
NI	Lands/Access	Any pending or authorized lands and realty actions in the wild horse gather area would not be substantially affected by the proposed action.	G. Ginouves	3/11/2022
NI	Lands with Wilderness Characteristics	The horse gather would not change the character of the landscape or naturalness in areas that have been identified as having lands with wilderness characteristics such as units UT-C010-108 and UT-C010-103. Solitude may be impacted for a short period of time due to the low-level flight of helicopters utilized during the gather period. The areas would still have wilderness characteristics after the proposed gather.	Dave Jacobson	3/2/2022
PI	Livestock Grazing	This issue is analyzed in Chapter 3. Livestock and wild horses compete directly for vegetative, water, and cover resources. Higher populations of wild horses mean more competition with livestock. Wild horse populations that are within AML reduce competition with livestock and wildlife. In some cases where wild horse populations are above AML the livestock permittees have had to reduce numbers to not over utilize the vegetative and water resources within certain allotments and pastures.	M. Bayles	2/16/2022
PI	Native American Religious Concerns	Native American consultation is on-going. Change to NI if affected tribes have no concerns.	R. Plank	
NP	National Historic Trails	There are no national historic trails within the gather area.	Dave Jacobson	3/2/2022
NI	Paleontology	Regardless of the surficial geology the transient and superficial nature of the proposed horse gather could not impact any fossil resources that may exist in the gather area.	E. Ginouves	2/15/2022
PI	Rangeland Health Standards	This is addressed as part of the rangeland health, vegetation, and wetland/riparian sections of Chapter 3 in the EA.	M. Bayles	2/16/2022
NI	Recreation	The gather area is used for dispersed types of recreation such as hunting, OHV exploring, and wildlife viewing. The area is used by RedCliff Ascent for wilderness therapy and their operation may need to be adjusted to ensure their employees and clients are not within the gather site during the operational period. There are no existing developed recreation resources which would be affected as a result of this proposal.	Dave Jacobson	3/2/2022
NI	Socio-Economics	The proposed gather activities would be transient and short-term, so they would not substantially impact of change the socioeconomics of the area.	G. Ginouves	3/11/2022
PI	Soils	This issue is analyzed in Chapter 3. Under the current situation of currently permitted livestock numbers, wildlife numbers being what they are, and wild horses above AML, inadequate residual vegetation (forage) and litter remain on areas of grazing allotments within the analysis area. Lack of protective ground cover directly affects the soil's exposure to the erosive elements of wind and water. A reduction in horse numbers	M. Bayles	2/16/2022

Determination	Resource	Rationale for Determination	Signature	Date
		would allow additional vegetation to remain on these key areas, thus providing additional protection to the soil surface.		
NI	Special Status Plants	<p>Ostler's ivesia and Pink Egg Milkvetch are known to occur within the project area, however, due to the location and proximity of these species it is expected that there would be little to no impact associated with the proposed action.</p> <p>Ostler's ivesia occurs on steep terrain and large quartzite outcrops at 6400 – 7900 feet elevation. It is likely that wild horse traps/staging areas would not be located in these areas due to elevations and steep slopes at which they occur.</p> <p>Pink Egg Milkvetch is known to occur within the Four Mile HMA. This special status species occurs in PJ, sagebrush, and mixed desert shrub communities at 5800-7550 feet elevation and is located in one location which is inaccessible to vehicle travel and would not be expected to be impacted by the proposed action.</p>	M. Bayles	2/16/2022
PI	Vegetation	This issue is analyzed in the Rangeland Health section of Chapter 3. The proposed management and removal of excess wild horses would benefit vegetative communities	M. Bayles	2/16/2022
NI	Visual Resources	Project as proposed is consistent with existing VRM classification, which is VRM class IV.	Dave Jacobson	3/2/2022
NI	Wastes (hazardous or solid)	The proposal should not produce any hazardous or solid wastes. Should any release occur, all State and Federal regulations shall be followed.	T. Carlson	2/16/2022
NI	Water Resources/Quality (drinking/surface/ground)	This remote analysis area is characterized by numerous small water sources where water quality is undetermined by the State. There are neither watersheds which contribute to, nor 303(d) listed waters in the analysis area. Drinking water is not present in the analysis area. Waters in the analysis area are primarily Class 4 waters, which are protected for agricultural uses, including livestock watering. It is likely that a large group of horses watering at an undeveloped site, such as a spring or seep, could contribute to short-term exceedances of water quality standards (siltation, fecal coliforms). However, this would not be expected due to the short-term nature of this action. The project proposal would not substantially impact water quality. Design features, such as removing wild horses from trap sites as quickly as possible, would minimize adverse impacts to water quality resulting from water trapping operations. As discussed in Chapter 3 of the EA, reduction in wild horse numbers to AML levels could have the result of allowing more protective vegetation in riparian areas and could offer some resultant improvement to water quality.	E. Shotwell	2/17/2022
PI	Wetlands/Riparian Zones	This issue is analyzed in Chapter 3. There are several riparian and wetland resources within the project area. Design features would minimize impacts to wetland/riparian areas from actions described in the proposed action and alternatives. It would be expected that reduction in wild horse numbers would be beneficial to riparian areas.	E. Shotwell	2/17/2022
NP	Wild and Scenic Rivers	There are no WSRs in the field office management area	Dave Jacobson	3/2/2022
NP	Wilderness/WSA	The proposed gather is not within any WSA or Wilderness areas.	Dave Jacobson	3/2/2022

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PI	Wild Horses	This issue is analyzed in Chapter 3.	C.Hunter	2/23/2022
PI	Wildlife & Fish	This issue is analyzed in Chapter 3. Project is in year-long mule deer and elk habitat (avoid winter Dec 1 to Apr 15) and year-long pronghorn habitat (avoid fawning May 1 to Jun 30). Managing wild horse numbers to AML will help alleviate any potential negative impacts to big game and other wildlife species, particularly at limited water sources.	D. Schaible	2/28/2022
PI	Wildlife - Greater Sage-Grouse	This issue is analyzed in Chapter 3. The Complex contains PHMA.	D. Schaible	2/28/2022
PI	Wildlife – Migratory Birds	<p>This issue is analyzed in Chapter 3. If possible, avoid wild horse gathers during the migratory bird nesting season (January 1 – August 31) to the greatest extent possible. If unavoidable, then avoid any habitat alteration, removal, or destruction during the primary nesting season for migratory birds (March 1 – July 31). Whenever possible, trapping sites would be in previously disturbed areas. Migratory bird nesting clearances for temporary trapping sites would be conducted if during migratory bird nesting season and clearances would be done within 7 – 10 days prior to any trapping site installations.</p> <p>Wild horse gathers could result in the take of migratory birds by unintentional trampling of nests (primarily ground nesting birds) by wild horses and abandonment of nests due to stress on nesting birds. Coordination with the USFWS has been conducted to create design features that minimize impacts to migratory birds. Positive long-term impacts are expected for migratory birds by improving habitat from reducing wild horse densities.</p>	D. Christensen	2/28/2022
PI	Wildlife-Special Status (not TEC)	This issue is analyzed in Chapter 3. BLM and State of Utah sensitive species include but are not limited to golden eagle (including several nests subject to MBTA/BGEPA stip), bald eagle, big free-tailed bat, burrowing owl, ferruginous hawk, fringed myotis, long-billed curlew, northern goshawk, pygmy rabbit, short-eared owl, spotted bat, three-toed woodpecker, and Townsend's big-eared bat. Follow BMPs for migratory birds. Primary impacts would be to greater sage-grouse.	D. Schaible	3/4/2022
NI	Wildlife T&E and Candidate	<p>The Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) report generated for the Bible Spring Complex area states that the Utah prairie dog (UPD), southwestern willow flycatcher (SWFL), and yellow-billed cuckoo (YBCU) could potentially be present and/or impacted from the proposed wild horse gather in the Bible Spring Complex. No designated critical habitat for these species is found within or reasonably near the Bible Spring Complex area. However, mapped UPD habitat is found within and adjacent to the Bible Springs Complex. Informal consultation with the USFWS may be required.</p> <p>As discussed in Chapters 2 and 3 of the EA, the following design features would mitigate any potential impacts to these species. Avoid gathering wild horses within 0.5 miles of mapped UPD habitat. Avoid locating trapping locations within 0.5 mi of occupied mapped UPD habitat. If trapping sites are to be located within 0.5 mi of occupied UPD habitat, then additional Section 7 Consultation with USFWS will be</p>	D. Christensen	2/28/2022

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		required and appropriate surveys and clearances may need to be conducted. Removal of wild horses would improve habitat for UPD, SWFL and YBCU are not expected to be impacted from the wild horse gather in the Bible Spring Complex area. There is very little riparian habitat that consists of willow and cottonwood in the Bible Spring Complex area that is suitable for SWFL and YBCU. It is determined that there would be a "No Affect" for these two species.		
NI	Woodland / Forestry	There could be some trampling of younger PJ during gather activities, but this would be temporary because of the short-term and transitory nature of the Proposed Action.	C. Peterson	2/15/2022

**FINAL REVIEW:**

Reviewer Title	Signature	Date	Comments
Environmental Coordinator			
Authorized Officer			